

His Coming.

BY DR. HORATIUS BONAR.

They tell me a solemn story,
But it is not sad to me,
For in its sweet unfolding
My Saviour's love I see.

They say that at any moment
The Lord of Life may come
To lift me from the cloud-land
Into the light of home.

They say I may have no warning,
I may not even hear
The rustle of his garments
As he softly draweth near.

Suddenly, in a moment,
Upon my ear may fall
The summons, "Loved of our Master,
Answer the Master's call."

Perhaps he will come in the noon-tide
Of some bright, sunny day,
When with dear ones all around me
My life seems bright and gay.

Pleasant must be the pathway,
Easy the shining road,
Up from the dimmer sunlight,
Unto the light of God.

Perhaps he will come in the stillness
Of the mild and quiet night,
When the earth is calmly sleeping
'Neath the moonbeam's silvery light.

When the stars are softly shining
O'er the slumbering land and sea,
Perhaps in holy stillness
The Master will come for me.

J. Cole, the Boy Hero

BY
EMMA GELLIBRAND.

CHAPTER V.

The next day I still felt sure he would come, and I went down into the room where he used to sleep, and saw Mrs. Wilson had put all in order, and fresh blankets and sheets were on the little bed, all ready for him. So many things put me in mind of the loving, gentle disposition. A little flower vase I valued very much had been broken by Bogie romping with one of my nieces, and knocking it down. It was broken in more than twenty pieces; and after I had patiently tried to mend it myself, and my nieces, with still greater patience, had had their turn at it, we had given it up as a bad job, and thought it had long ago gone on to the dust-heap.

There were some shelves on the wall of Joe's room where his treasures were kept, and on one of these shelves, covered with an old white handkerchief, was a little tray containing the vase, a bottle of cement, and camel's-hair brush. The mending was finished, all but two or three of the smallest pieces, and beautifully done; it must have taken time, and an amount of patience that put my efforts and those of the girls to shame; but Joe's was a labour of love, and did not weary him. He would probably have put it in its usual place one morning, when mended, and said nothing about it until I found it out, and then confessed, in his own queer way, "Please, I knew you was sorry it was broke, and so I mended it;" then he would have hurried away, flushed with pleasure at my few words of thanks and praise.

On the mantelpiece were more of Joe's treasures—four or five cheap photographs, the subjects quite characteristic of Joe. One of them was a religious subject, "The Shepherd with a little lamb on his shoulders." A silent prayer went up from my heart that somewhere that same Good Shepherd was finding lost Joe, and bringing him safely back to us.

There were some pebbles he had picked up during a memorable trip to Margate with Dick, a year before I saw him; which pebbles he firmly believed were real "aggits," and had promised to have them polished soon, and made into brooch and earrings for Mrs. Wilson.

There was a very old-fashioned photograph of my father that I had torn in half and thrown into the waste-paper basket. I saw this had been carefully joined together and enclosed in a cheap frame—the only one that could boast of being so preserved. I suppose Joe could only afford one frame, and his sense of the fitness of things made him choose the Missis's picture to be first honoured.

How sad I felt looking round the room! People may smile at my feeling so sad and concerned about a servant, a common page-boy. Aye, smile on, if you will, but tell me, my friend, can you

say, if you were in Joe's position at that time with circumstantial evidence so strong against you, poor and lowly as he was, are there four or five, or even two or three of your friends, who would believe in you, stand up for you, and trust in you, in spite of all, as we did for Joe?

I had gone up to my sitting-room, after telling Mary to light the fire in poor Joe's room, and let it look warm and cosy, for I had some sort of presentiment that I should see the poor boy again very soon—how I knew not, but I have all my life been subject to spiritual influences, and have seldom been mistaken in them.

We were all thinking of going early to rest, for since the robbery, none of us had had any real sleep. Suddenly the front door bell rang timidly, as if the visitor were not quite sure of it's being right to pull the handle.

"Perhaps that's Joe," said my sister. But I knew Joe would not ring that bell.

We heard Mary open the door, and a man's voice ask if Mr. Aylmer lived there.

"Yes," said Mary, "but he is abroad, but you can see Mrs. Aylmer."

Then came a low murmuring of voices, and Mary came in, saying:

"Oh, ma'am, it's Dick, Joe's brother; and as says, may he see you?"

"Send him in here at once," I replied. And in a moment Dick stood before me; Dick, Joe's beau-ideal of all that was good, noble, and to be admired. I must say the mind-picture I had formed of Dick was totally unlike the reality. I had expected to see a sun-burnt big

And I thought you doubted him too; but now I hear you say you're his friend, and believe in him, and don't think he robbed you, I know now there's good folks in the world, and there's mercy and justice, and it ain't all wrong, as I'd come a most to think as it was, when I first know'd about this 'ere."

"Sit down, Dick," I said, "and recover yourself, and let us see what can be done. I will tell you all that has happened, and then perhaps you can throw some light on Joe's conduct—you who know him so well."

Dick sat down, and shading his eyes with his hand that his tears might not betray his weakness any more, he listened quietly while I went over all the events of that dreadful night.

When I had finished, Dick sat for some moments quite silent, then with a weary gesture, passing his hand across his forehead, he remarked sadly.

"I can't make nothing of it; it's a thing beyond my understanding. I'm that dazed like, I can't see nothin' straight. However, what I've got to do is to find Joe, and that I mean to do; if he's alive I'll find him, and then let him speak for hisself. I don't believe he's done nothing wrong, but if he has done ever so little or ever so much, he'll own up to it whatever it is, that's what Joe'll do. I told him to lay by them words and hold to 'em, and I'll lay my life he'll do as I told him. I've got a bed down to Marylebone way, at my aunt's what's married to a policeman, I'm to stay there, and I'll have a talk with 'em about this and get some ad-

shire, and there are two barrels of Devonshire apples on that cab, one for you, and one for the wife, that is why you see me here, for I thought it would not be ten minutes out of my road to pass by here and leave them with you, and so save the trouble of sending them by carrier to-morrow."

"I dare say Mrs. Wilson will find a place in the basement," I said, "for we don't use half the room there is down there."

Having ordered the barrel to be stowed away, I soon settled my visitor comfortably in an armchair by the fire, with a cup of his favourite cocoa by his side.

"And now, my dear," said he, "tell me about this burglary that has taken place, and which has made you look as if you wanted me to take care of you awhile, and bring back some colour to your pale cheeks. And what about this boy? Is it the same queer little fellow who chose midnight to play his pranks in once before? I'm not often deceived in a face, and I thought his was an honest one. I—"

"So it was," I interrupted; "don't say a word until I've told you all, and you will—"

I had scarcely begun speaking, when a succession of the most fearful screams arose from downstairs, each rising louder and louder, in the extreme of terror. My sister, who had gone to her room, rushed down to me; the girls, in their dressing-gowns, just as they were preparing for bed, followed, calling out, "Auntie! Oh, Auntie! what is it? Who is screaming? What can be the matter?" Hardly were they in the room when Mary rushed in, ghastly, her eyes staring, and, in a voice hoarse with terror, gasped out, "Come! come! he's found! he's murdered! I saw him. He's lying in the collar, with his throat cut. Oh, it's horrible!" Then she began to scream again.

The doctor tried to hold me back; but I broke from him, and ran downstairs, where I could find no one; all was dark in the kitchen, but there was a light in the area, and I was soon there, followed by Dr. Loring.

By the open cellar door stood Mrs. Wilson, and the cabman with her. Directly she saw me, she called out, "Oh, dear mistress, don't you come here; it's not a sight for you. Take her away, Doctor Loring, she musn't see it."

"What is it?" I cried; "Mary says it's—"

I could not say the words, but seizing the candle from Mrs. Wilson's hand, I went into the cellar.

The good doctor was close to me, with more light, by the aid of which we beheld, in the far corner, facing us, what seemed to be a bundle of blankets, from which protruded a head, a horrible red stream surrounding it, and flowing, as it were, from the open mouth. One second brought me close. It was Joe—Joe, with his poor limbs bound with cruel ropes, and in his mouth for a gag they had forced one of those bright red socks he would always wear. Thank God, it was only that red sock, and not the horrible red stream I had feared. He was dead, of course; but not such a fearful death as that.

The doctor soon pulled the horrid gag from his mouth, and the good-natured cabman, who evidently felt for us, helped to cut the ropes, and lift up the poor, cold little form.

As they lifted him, something that was in the blankets fell heavily to the ground. It was poor Bogie's dead body, stabbed in many places, each wound enough to have let out the poor dumb creature's life.

By this time help had arrived, and once more the police took possession of us, as it were.



THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR. (See S. S. Lesson Notes.)

fellow, with broad shoulders and expressive features.

The real Dick was a thin, delicate-looking young man, with a pale face, and black, straight hair. He stood with his hat in his hand, looking down as if afraid to speak.

"Oh, pray come in," I cried, going forward to meet him. "I know who you are. Oh, have you brought me any news of poor Joe? We are all his friends here, his true friends, and you must let us be yours too in this trouble. Have you seen him?"

At my words the bowed head was lifted up, and then I saw Dick's face as it was. If ever truth, honour, and generosity looked out from the windows of a soul, they looked out of those large blue eyes of Dick's—eyes so exactly like Joe's in expression, that the black lashes instead of the fair ones seemed wrong somehow.

"God bless you, lady, for them words," said Dick; and before I could prevent it, he had knelt at my feet, caught my hand and pressed it to his lips, while wild sobs broke from him.

"Forgive me," he said, rising to his feet, and leaning with one hand on the back of a chair, his whole frame shaking with emotion. "Forgive me for givin' way like this; but I've seen them papers about our Joe, and I know what's being thought of him, and I've come 'ere ashamed to see you, thinkin' you believed as the rest do, that Joe robbed you after all your goodness to him. Why, lady, I tell you rather than I'd bett'le that of my little lad, as I thrashed till his heart almost broke to hear him 'b. for the only lie as he ever told in all his life; if I could believe it, I'd take father's old gun and end my life, for I'd be a beast, not fit to live any longer.

vice. I know Joe's innocent, and why don't he come and say so? But I'll find him."

I inquired about the old people, and how they bore their trial.

"Father's a'most beside hisself," said Dick; "and only that he's got to keep mother in the dark about this, he'd have come with me; but mother, she's a-bed with rheumatics, and doctor told father her heart was weak like, and she musn't be told, or it would p'raps kill her. She thinks a deal of Joe, does mother, being the youngest, and always such a sort of lovin' little chap he were." And here Dick's voice broke again, and I made him go down to Mrs. Wilson, and have some refreshment before leaving, and he promised to see me again the first thing in the morning, when he had talked to his friend the policeman.

Scarcely had Dick gone, when a loud, and this time firm ring, announced another visitor, and in a cab, too, I could hear. Evidently there was no going to rest early that night, as ten o'clock was then striking.

Soon, to my surprise, I heard a well-known voice, and Mary announced Dr. Loring—my husband's old friend, of whom I have already spoken.

"Well, my dear," he cried, in his pleasant, cheerful voice, that in itself seemed to lift some of the heaviness from my heart, "are you not astonished to see me at such an hour?"

"Astonished, certainly," I replied; "but very, very glad. You are always welcome; and more than ever now, when we are in trouble and sorrow. Do sit down, and stay with me awhile."

"Yes, I will, for an hour, gladly," he said. "But there's something outside that had better be brought in first. You know I've only just arrived from Devon-

(To be continued.)

Mr. Fussy.—"I don't see why you wear those ridiculous big sleeves when you have nothing to fill them." Mrs. Fussy—"Do you fill your silk hat?"

A newspaper reporter wrote: "Dr. Chargem felt of the injured man's pulse and then prescribed for him." The compositor made it read: "Dr. Chargem felt of the injured man's purse and then prescribed for him."

Jimmie Joiner.—"I say, Billy, we had a fine supper last night. Our minister was visiting us."

Billy Burt.—"You don't say so? Why, ours doesn't come to see us until we are dead."

A greedy boy is capable of clever misunderstandings. "No, Willie, my dear," said the little boy's mother, "no more cakes to-night. It is too near bedtime, and you know you can't sleep on a full stomach." "Well," said Willie, "but I can sleep on my back."